Reporting Program Evaluation Findings: How to Demonstrate Effectiveness to Stakeholders

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July 21, 2015

Webinar Details

- This webinar presentation has been pre-recorded

- A live question-and-answer session will be held at the conclusion of the presentation

- Questions may be submitted anonymously at any time via the "Question" pod

- Audio for this presentation will be provided through Adobe Connect; there is no separate dial-in

- Live closed captioning is available in the "Closed Captioning" pod through Federal Relay Conference Captioning

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Materials for Download

- Materials from this series and other program evaluation resources are available in the "Files" pod and at:

    http://www.dcoe.mil/About_DCoE/Program_Evaluation.aspx

- For information on other DCoE webinar and training series, visit:

    http://www.dcoe.mil/Training/Monthly_Webinars.aspx

Continuing Education Details

- This continuing education activity is provided through collaboration between DCoE and Professional Education Services Group (PESG).

- DCoE's awarding of continuing education (CE) credit is limited in scope to health care providers who actively provide psychological health and traumatic brain injury care to active-duty U.S. service members, reservists, National Guardsmen, military veterans and/or their families.

- The authority for training of contractors is at the discretion of the chief contracting official. Currently, only those contractors with scope of work or with commensurate contract language are permitted in this training.

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Continuing Education Details (continued)

- If you preregistered for the webinar and want to obtain CE certificates or a certificate of attendance, you must complete the online CE evaluation

- After the webinar, please visit http://dcoe.cds.pesgce.com to complete the online CE evaluation and download your CE certificate or certificate of attendance

- The CE evaluation will be open through August 4th, 2015

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Presenter

Capt. Armen Thoumaian, Ph.D., USPHS
Deputy Chief of the Office of Integrated Services, DCoE

Capt. Armen Thoumaian is a scientist director in the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) with more than 30 years experience in health and mental health program design and evaluation.

In January 2012, Capt. Thoumaian joined the staff at the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) to help design and implement program evaluation and improvement efforts in the Defense Department.

He holds a B.A. in psychology and sociology, an M.A. in general experimental psychology, and a Ph.D. in social welfare and social work, and has completed a National Institute of Mental Health fellowship in Community Mental Health.


USPHS Capt. Armen Thoumaian, Ph.D.

Presenters

Carter Frank, M.A., M.S.
Research Scientist, Contract Support for DCoE

Mr. Carter Frank has over 15 years of experience in program development and management at local, regional and national levels. The breadth of his 33-year career includes 11 years of military service, spans military and civilian environments, clinical and non-clinical mental health operations, training, human resource management, business development and government contracting. Mr. Frank holds a B.S. in mathematical sciences, a M.A. in counseling, and a M.S. in management information systems. He is a licensed clinical professional counselor.
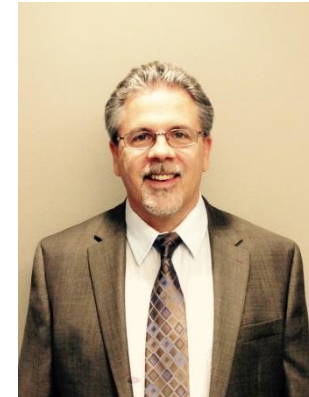
Mr. Carter Frank

Debra Stark, M.B.A.
Research Scientist, Contract Support for DCoE

Ms. Debra Stark is a survey methodologist with 15-plus years of research experience. Her background includes program evaluation and monitoring, qualitative data analysis and survey instrument design. She has worked on public health services evaluation projects with various federal agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs and TRICARE Management Activity. Ms. Stark holds an M.B.A.


Ms. Debra Stark

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Moderator

Carmina Aguirre, M.A.

Research Scientist, Contract Support for DCoE

Ms. Carmina Aguirre has over 14 years of experience within the Defense Department. Her background includes executive leadership, psychological health, sexual assault prevention and response, and public affairs. In addition to supporting DCoE, she serves as Chief of Public Affairs in the Florida Air National Guard. Ms. Aguirre holds a B.A. in psychology and a M.A. in human services with a specialization in executive leadership.

Ms. Carmina Aguirre

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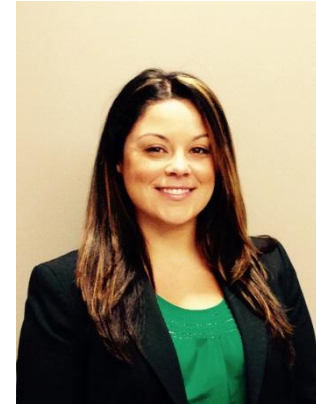
Overview and Objectives

- This training presentation will cover how program managers and administrators can demonstrate the results of program evaluation and improvement efforts to key stakeholders with varying interests.

- At the conclusion of this webinar, participants will be able to:

  - Identify key stakeholders and their most common areas of interest in program evaluation results
  - Use strategic communications to engage stakeholder interest
  - Apply best practices for various reporting formats
  - Select and implement strategies to address common challenges that programs face in demonstrating program effectiveness

Agenda

- Identifying Stakeholders and Interests
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Choosing Appropriate Communication Formats
- Best Practices for Effective Reporting
- Common Challenges
- Conclusion
- Resources and References
- Feedback and Q&A Session

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Identifying Stakeholders and Interests

Use Reporting to
Engage Stakeholder Support

"Accountability breeds response-ability."

--Stephen R. Covey

Image Source: http://www.wikipedia.com/

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What is a Stakeholder?

"Stakeholders are people or organizations that are invested in the program, are interested in the results of the evaluation and/or have a stake in what will be done with the results of the evaluation." (CDC, 2006)

Understand Your Audience

To gain a general understanding of your stakeholders and their interests, consider these broad questions:

1. **Who are the stakeholders?**

2. **What information do they need?**

3. **Why do they need it?**

Who are the Stakeholders?

Ask three questions to identify specific stakeholders:

- Who is involved in *program operations*?
    - Implementation team (e.g., program staff, administrators)

- Who is *served or affected by* the program?
    - Participants and community (e.g., family members)

- Who will *use the evaluation results* for decision-making?
    - Decision makers (e.g., service leadership, funding agency)

Who are the Stakeholders? (continued)

Stakeholders	Stakeholder Category		
	Implementation Team	Participants and Community	Decision Makers
Policymakers			✓
Senior Leaders			✓
Managers/Supervisors	✓		
Program Staff	✓		
Participants		✓	
Family Members		✓	
Health Care System		✓	
External Programs		✓	
Community Organizations		✓	

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What Information do Stakeholders Need?

Evaluation Questions	Stakeholder Category		
	Implementation Team	Participants and Community	Decision Makers
Was the program implemented with fidelity?	Are activities being conducted properly?	What services does the program offer?	Is the program operating according to its mission?
Is the program sustainable?	Are there standard operating procedures?	Will this program be available in the future?	Is the program collecting and using feedback?
How do program structures and processes function?	Do program operations allow for efficient delivery of care?	What can I expect during program participation?	How many people have access and who are the participants?
Has the program achieved its intended outcomes?	Does the program benefit participants?	Is this program helping me and/or my family?	Is this program cost-effective in meeting its intended outcomes?

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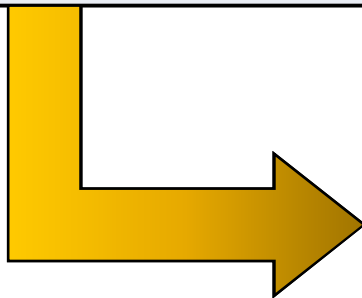For Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury

Why Do Stakeholders Need this Information?

- Demonstrate accountability
- Improve program services
- Advocate for service members and their families
- Identify lessons learned
- Build relationships

- Generate knowledge
- Provoke discussion
- Encourage action
- Acquire or maintain funding and support
- Renew interest in and commitment to the program
- Enhance marketing efforts

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Role of Program Administrators

Consider the function of program leadership in reporting results to stakeholders

- Purpose – Advocate for the program

- Task – Assert program value and highlight strengths

- Connect – Educate and inspire support

Result = More effective program

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Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder Roadmap

- Actively and visibly engage with stakeholders whenever possible
- Develop and coordinate regularly-scheduled program updates with stakeholders
- Communicate directly with stakeholders
- Build coalitions with peers, leaders and sponsors

One of the top factors supporting program evaluation success is effective sponsorship!

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Support and Strengthen Stakeholder Interests

- Collect and analyze stakeholder feedback

- Address and manage concerns

- Implement action plans

- Celebrate successes
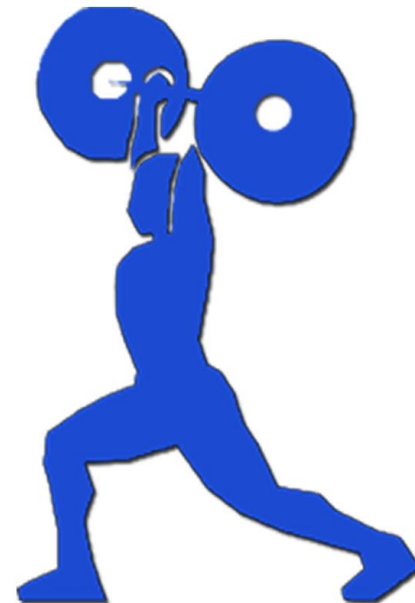
Collect and Analyze Feedback

- Arrange conversations and interviews at stakeholder's convenience

- Listen to stakeholders (e.g., questionnaires, interviews, focus groups)

- Identify stakeholder interests and highlight those areas when reporting

Address and Manage Concerns

- Identify and confirm stakeholder concerns

- Develop action plans to resolve concerns based on communications models

- Identify root causes of concerns

    - Why is this happening?

    - What information gaps need to be addressed?

Address and Manage Concerns (continued)

Develop action plans, such as ProSci ADKAR$^{®}$, to address concerns

If the gap is:	Actions can include:
Awareness	Communications with senior leaders about the need for program evaluation efforts (why, risk of not doing it, mandates for program effectiveness); face-to-face communications with key stakeholders about how program effectiveness impacts program viability
Desire	Implement and promote use of concern management strategies (listen actively, remove barriers, provide simple clear choices, etc.)
Knowledge	Presentations on how program evaluation and improvement capabilities support the mission and improvements in operational readiness
Ability	Enable key sponsors to promote and provide support for program evaluation and improvement capabilities; coaching by leadership/SMEs
Reinforcement	Messages from senior leaders that program evaluation efforts are here to stay; recurring sessions with individual stakeholders to identity emerging gaps

Text adapted from: http://www.prosci.com/adkar-model/overview-3/

Address and Manage Concerns (continued)

Elements of an effective strategy:

- Actively engage individuals or groups

- Listen and understand objections

- Focus on the "what" and let go of the "how"

- Remove barriers whenever possible and consider viable alternatives

- Provide simple, clear choices and consequences

- Create hope (e.g., for a better future state)

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Implement Action Plans

- Implement strategic communications plans based on ProSci ADKAR® or other model

- Enable key sponsors to help manage concerns and uncertainty

- Conduct reviews of strategic communications campaigns

Celebrate Successes

- Match stakeholder interests to ongoing accomplishments

- Publicly celebrate even small successes

Choosing Appropriate Communication Formats

Communicate Program Evaluation Findings

- Disseminating results is an important component of the overall program evaluation process

- Effective communications increase the likelihood that results will be used

- Sending messages through the right channels ensures the "right people" receive the information (Patton, 2008)

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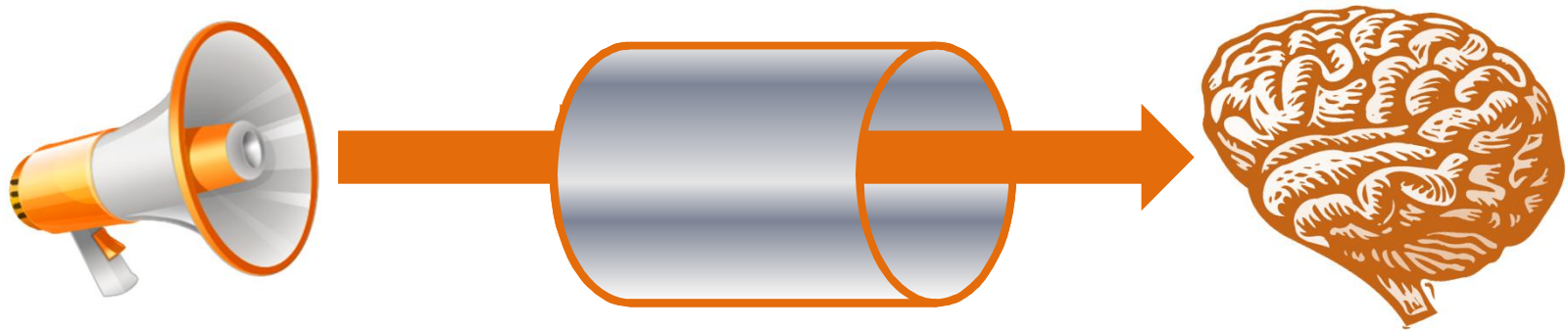
Considerations for Reporting

Specific aspects of reporting will be determined by:	
Target Audience	Consider the audience's background and level of experience or expertise
Reporting Resources	Consider what types of reporting can be achieved given available resources
Regulations/ Requirements	Consider what rules apply to reporting and what is required by stakeholders for whom the communication is intended
Norms	Consider how similar programs report information about effectiveness, or what is typical for the intended audience

Plan to Communicate

As part of developing a program evaluation, design a communications plan in coordination with stakeholders for when and how information such as feedback from program participants, lessons learned, and courses of action will be disseminated

- Keep stakeholders informed in the manner they prefer

- Information should match stakeholder needs and interests

Maintain Accurate Data for Quick Reference

- Build program evaluation reporting capacity into program operations
- Gather and maintain readily accessible information on:

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND COSTS	**PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS**	**PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES**
DATA THAT SUPPORT DECISION-MAKING	**IMPROVEMENTS TO PROGRAM SERVICES**	**COMMON QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES**

Many Communication Formats Are Available

Written Communication	Oral Communication	Internet and Social Media
Written evaluation report	Teleconference	Website
Executive summary	Conference	Twitter
Point paper	Radio and TV	Facebook
Talking paper	Speaker/panel presentation	Instagram
Bullet background paper	PowerPoint presentation	YouTube
White paper	Debrief	Blog
Interim progress report	Outbrief	Webinar
After action report	Hotwash	Podcast
Newsletter	Commander's call	RSS Feed
Brochure	Stand down	Live streaming
Flyer	Personal discussion	Listserv blast
Newspaper article		
Quad chart		
Commander's update briefing		
Email		

Choose Formats Based on the Audience
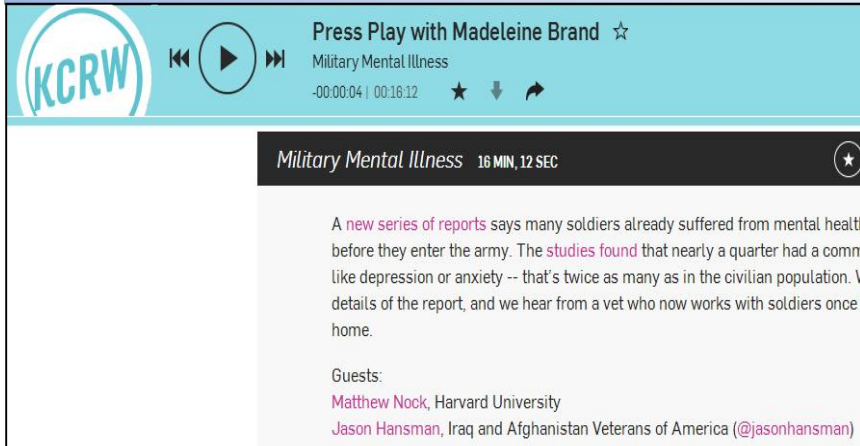
Stakeholder Audience	Format Option
Decision Makers	
Funding agencies Program sponsors Board members Executive leadership	Evaluation report Executive summary Mission impact statement Commander's update briefing
Implementation Team	
Program staff Contracting officer's representative Action officer Program administrator Champion/advocate	Technical report Quad chart Executive summary Staff meeting Commander's call
Participants and Community	
Program participants Family members Installation Community	Town hall meeting or conference Stand down Print, social media Radio and TV (commercial, PSA) Program newsletter

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Sample Communications Plan

Target Audience	Messaging Goals	Format	Timeframe
Decision Makers	− Maintain or increase program funding	− Executive summary − Targeted program briefs	− Within 90 days of conclusion of funding − Quarterly
Implementation Team	− Inform staff about progress − Enhance cohesiveness and effort toward program objectives	− Meetings and briefing documents − Final evaluation report − After action report	− Weekly − Monthly − Within 180 days of conclusion of funding
Participants and Community	− Promote program − Recruit and/or retain participants	− Social media − Radio interviews − Flyers − TV	− Weekly − Monthly − Quarterly

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Communication Examples

Radio Interview: STARS Program

DVBIC Web Page

DCoE Facebook Page

DCoE Twitter Page

Check and Track

- Coordinate with your Public Affairs Office for permissions and release authority; all photos are reviewed for operational security concerns

- Collect and review statistics for all media and communications activity to report usage, understand trends and gauge success of specific events

- Monitor all accounts to review the number of followers, updates, re-tweets, likes, shares, downloads, postings, replies and mentions

Best Practices for Effective Reporting

General Guidelines for Reporting

All forms of reporting should be:	
Clear	Use plain language and define terms, acronyms and abbreviations
Concise	Include only relevant information and provide a brief summary at the start and end
Consistent	Use the same terms to mean the same thing
Correct	Maintain accuracy and acknowledge what is and is not known
Compelling	Provide information in a way that tells a story about the program and its results

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Written Reports: Purpose and Best Practices

- Written reports are the most formal and extensive type of reporting

- Often requested by senior-level stakeholders and required by funders

- They should explain:

  - **The program:** What is it intended to do and how? Who does it serve, and why does it exist?

  - **The evaluation:** What is its purpose or focus? What are its results, and how were they derived?

  - **Next steps:** How will the results be used? What changes should be implemented? What is the way forward?

Written Reports: Sample Format

- **Executive Summary**
  - Regulation

- **Program Overview**
  - Mission, goals and objectives
  - Inputs and activities
  - Outputs and outcomes

- **Program Evaluation Methods**

- **Results and Conclusions**

- **References**

- **Appendices**

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Presentations: Purpose and Best Practices

- Presentations allow direct interaction with stakeholders

- Especially useful for generating feedback

- Provide an overview of the evaluation method and results

- They should include:

  - An overview

  - Sections similar to a written report

  - Opportunities for feedback and questions

  - Contact information and additional resources

Presentations: Engage the Audience

☑ Tailor content to the audience

☑ Break up content into digestible sections

☑ Use images and examples to enhance understanding

☑ Make accompanying documents "stand alone" for individuals who cannot attend

☑ Avoid overly complex language and unnecessary terms, acronyms and abbreviations

☑ Avoid excessive text or presentation length

Websites and Promotional Materials: Purpose and Best Practices

- Websites and promotional materials (e.g., flyers, brochures) can be basic or in-depth

- Promotional pieces are useful in providing summary information to participants, the public and program partners to:

    - Advertise or inform
    - Recruit participants
    - Generate referrals
    - Gather support

- Social media sites and blogs allow interaction with participants

Websites and Promotional Materials on the Internet: Usability Guidelines

Follow established usability guidelines when developing web content. Construct a home page that conveys a good impression.

- Enable access to the home page from other pages
- Include a masthead, concise tag lines, key topics in order of importance, and easy-to-read news stories
- Create separate pages for component parts or different audiences such as participants and providers and display content arrangement on home page
- Limit unnecessary scrolling. Important material should be presented "above the fold"

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Common Challenges

Questions to Consider

- What are important considerations for reporting on military programs?

- What if I can't show my program is achieving outcomes at the time a program evaluation is carried out?

- How do I highlight areas for improvement without reflecting negatively on my program?

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What Are Important Considerations for Reporting on Military Programs?

- Program priorities should align with Defense Department and service interests

- Build in extra time for review by chain of command when preparing reporting documents

- Effective communication is especially important in an environment with many other reports, meetings and presentations

- Ensure appropriate permissions are acquired before release of program information

Image Source: California National Guard

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What if I Can't Show my Program is Achieving Outcomes at the Time a Program Evaluation Is Carried Out?

- Programs vary widely in their capabilities to conduct and participate in program evaluations

- Programs with lower evaluation capabilities should begin to:

  - Establish a plan for improving program evaluation capabilities within the program

  - Seek consultation and support from outside sources

  - Acquire appropriate training and resources needed to conduct evaluation activities

- Programs that have evaluation capabilities and have not found an effect should plan and carry out improvements

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How do I Highlight Areas for Improvement Without Negatively Affecting my Program?

- There are no perfect programs, and the environment in which programs operate is constantly changing

- Stakeholders may be more willing to accept program limitations if/when:

  - There is a well-designed plan to carry out improvements

  - There are other areas in which the program is achieving success

- A critical part of program improvement lies in carrying out change efforts, measuring progress and demonstrating the effects of improvements

Conclusion

Key Takeaways

✪ Stakeholder engagement is essential to program evaluation efforts and requires strategic communications in support of stakeholder interests

✪ Multiple reporting formats may be used to highlight program successes and demonstrate effectiveness to stakeholders

✪ Follow communications best practices and usability guidelines to clarify your message

Photo by: Stewart Leiwakabessy

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References and Resources

Resources

DCoE Program Evaluation Guide:

http://www.dcoe.mil/About_DCoE/Program_Evaluation/2015_Resources_and_Training.aspx

DoD Manual for Written Material:

http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/511004m_v1.pdf

DoD Plain Language Website:

http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/plainlanguage.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

http://www.cdc.gov/eval/index.htm

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:

http://captus.samhsa.gov/access-resources/reporting-your-evaluation-results

National Network of Libraries of Medicine:

http://nnlm.gov/evaluation/guides.html

508 Compliance:

http://www.section508.gov/

Resources (continued)

Deployment Health Clinical Center:
http://www.pdhealth.mil/

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center:
http://dvbic.dcoe.mil/

National Center for Telehealth and Technology:
http://www.t2.health.mil/

The Community Tool Box, University of Kansas:
http://ctb.ku.edu/en

Minnesota Department of Health:
http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/opi/qi/toolbox

Michigan Public Health Training Center:
http://miphtcdev.web.itd.umich.edu/trainings

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Feedback and
Question-and-Answer Session

Feedback and Question-and-Answer Session

- We are now open for a live question-and-answer session. Please submit your questions anonymously via the Question box located in the center of your screen.

- Your feedback is important!
  - After the Q&A, please follow the displayed link to complete the Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) card
  - Or, you may immediately access the ICE card via the Chat box

- Additional questions and comments may be directed to

Capt. Armen Thoumaian

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Save the Date

The final webinar in the DCoE PEI Webinar 2015 Series will be on August 18, 2015 from 1–2:00 p.m. (ET)

Acting on Findings: How to Use Evaluation Results to Improve Program Quality and Effectiveness

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